

## Community resources

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*courage is contagious*

## Viewing cable 08BEIRUT1348, LEBANON: BELLEMARE ANXIOUS FOR MORE USG ASSISTANCE

If you are new to these pages, please read an introduction on the [structure of a cable](#) as well as how to [discuss them](#) with others. See also the [FAQs](#)

### Understanding cables

Every cable message consists of three parts:

- The top box shows each cables unique reference number, when and by whom it originally was sent, and what its initial classification was.
- The middle box contains the header information that is associated with the cable. It includes information about the receiver(s) as well as a general subject.
- The bottom box presents the body of the cable. The opening can contain a more specific subject, references to other cables ([browse by origin](#) to find them) or additional comment. This is followed by the main contents of the cable: a summary, a collection of specific topics and a comment section.

To understand the justification used for the classification of each cable, please use this [WikiSource](#) article as reference.

### Discussing cables

If you find meaningful or important information in a cable, please link directly to its unique reference number. Linking to a specific paragraph in the body of a cable is also possible by copying the appropriate link (to be found at the paragraph symbol). Please mark messages for social networking services like Twitter with the hash tags **#cablegate** and a hash containing the reference ID e.g. **#08BEIRUT1348**.

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
08BEIRUT1348	2008-09-15 14:18	2011-08-30 01:44	SECRET//NOFORN	Embassy Beirut

Appears in these articles:

<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/16545>  
<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/16461>  
<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/16545>  
<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/16546>  
<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/16605>  
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<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/16645>

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FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3034  
INFO RUEHEE/ARAB LEAGUE COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RUCNMEM/EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RHMFISS/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY  
RHMFISS/CDR USEUCOM VAHINGEN GE PRIORITY  
RUEAWJA/DEPT OF JUSTICE WASHDC PRIORITY  
RHEHAAA/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 2905

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 03 BEIRUT 001348

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DEPT FOR NEA/FO, NEA/ELA, IO/FO-HOOK, WARLICK,  
IO/UNP-AMORRISON, L/FO-JBELLINGER, JTHESSIN,  
L/AN-LJACOBSON, L/UNA-TBUCHWALD, INR/GGI-MARGULIES,  
CIA/CNC-JFINKEL, JBRODERERICK, CIA/CTC-JBEAN, DOJ-JEVY,  
USUN-KHALILZAD, WOLFF, SCHEDLBAUER, NSC FOR  
ABRAMS/RAMCHAND/YERGER/MCDERMOTT

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/12/2018

TAGS: PREL PTER PGOV PINR UNSC LE SY

SUBJECT: LEBANON: BELLEMARE ANXIOUS FOR MORE USG ASSISTANCE  
THAN HE HAS SEEN

REF: THE HAGUE 744

Classified By: Ambassador Michele J. Sison for reasons 1.4 (b), (d)

SUMMARY  
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1. (S/NF) In a September 12 meeting with the Ambassador, Daniel Bellemare, Commissioner of the UN Independent International Investigative Commission (UNIIIC) made three specific requests for USG assistance and additional requests for USG action. First, he asked that the USG provide intelligence information that UNIIIC has formally requested. Second, that the USG loan UNIIIC two criminal investigators TDY. UNIIIC needs "investigators who can question a witness" to interview some 200 persons currently in prison who may

have some relevant information. Third, that the USG urge the UK to do more to help UNIIIC, particularly with intelligence information (the UK has provided loaned personnel).

12. (S/NF) In addition, Bellemare asked for USG support when the Management Committee considers the Tribunal operating budget on September 25 -- the same day that Lebanese President Sleiman will meet President Bush in Washington. He also raised the prospect of consultations among the P-5 on a new resolution to clarify some legal issues. Finally he repeated earlier requests for a USG reaction to 26 sketches of possible suspects that UNIIIC had given the USG and asked about getting access to alleged Hizballah defectors reportedly in the U.S.

13. (S/NF) On other matters, Bellemare said that the GOL has not asked that UNIIIC investigate the latest political assassination (the September 10 attack on opposition Druze member Saleh Aridi). He is concerned about a new Telecommunication Ministry directive that may impede his plans for using wiretaps. End Summary.

GOL HAS NOT ASKED THAT UNIIIC  
INVESTIGATE LATEST ASSASSINATION  
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14. (S/NF) The Ambassador and DCM met on September 12 with Daniel Bellemare, Commissioner of the UN Independent International Investigative Commission (UNIIIC), in his office in Monteverde. The Ambassador asked if UNIIIC would investigate the case of Saleh Aridi, a Druze political official assassinated in a car bomb attack near Beirut on September 10. Bellemare explained that for UNIIIC to take on a case, first the GOL must ask the UN SYG, then the SYG and Security Council must approve. He said that the GOL had shown no indication that it would request that UNIIIC investigate the Aridi killing. UNIIIC is interested in finding out more about the Aridi attack, since details are similar to other cases it is investigating. If it is not invited to investigate but wants information about a case, UNIIIC must submit a request to the Lebanese chief prosecutor. The criteria the GOL uses to decide on requesting UNIIIC assistance is "a mystery to me" Bellemare said. (NOTE: The Aridi assassination is the first of a pro-Syrian politician. END NOTE.)

WIRETAPPING  
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15. (S/NF) Bellemare was concerned about something he had learned the day before that might affect wiretapping. The Telecommunications Ministry had directed two private telecom companies in Lebanon to inform the Ministry about any requests for wiretapping. He noted that it is well known that the Internal Security Forces (ISF), the national police, conduct wiretapping even though the legal basis for their authority to do so is weak. The Telecom Ministry's move may have been directed against the ISF. The order, however, also could limit the ability of UNIIIC to conduct wiretaps if the phone companies fear that they will have to report those efforts to the Telecommunications Ministry.

16. (S/NF) The Ambassador asked if Bellemare believed the action was targeted at UNIIIC, noting that the new Telecommunications Minister is from the opposition. Bellemare replied that he was not in a position to say. At his meeting with PM Fouad Siniora earlier in the week, on September 8, Siniora told Bellemare to inform him if he runs into any problems with cooperation from government officials. He said he might discuss this with the PM if it looks as if this new telecom directive will be a problem, but first he will meet with officials of the two telecom companies next week. The Ambassador offered to support his efforts at resolving this issue.

17. (S/NF) Bellemare noted that at his August 14 meeting in The Hague with the USG Interagency Working Group (IWG), he had asked for USG help with wiretapping capability. He said

that trying to work wiretapping through the Lebanese ISF or military intelligence would be like "putting the names (of targets) in the paper". He explained that UN legal experts were currently looking into the possibility that UNIIIC has legal authority to carry out wiretaps. Beyond legal authority for wiretapping, though, Bellemare said he needs technical capability.

#### ASSISTANCE FROM THE USG

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¶8. (S/NF) Bellemare expressed frustration that USG has not provided more in response to his requests for assistance, and noted that he has discussed this with State Department officials. He outlined three requests for USG assistance for his investigation.

-- One, provide intelligence information that UNIIIC has formally requested, or inform him that it cannot be provided, so that he knows not to pursue the requests.

-- Two, provide two loaned criminal analysts on TDY. UNIIIC needs "investigators who can question a witness" to interview some 200 persons currently in prison who may have some relevant information.

-- Three, using USG influence, urge the U government to provide more to UNIIIC, particularly regarding intelligence information. Bellemare said he has requests in to MI-6, but has not received much. On personnel, Scotland Yard has provided a loaned investigator.

¶9. (S/NF) Bellemare showed a good understanding of the problems associated with complying with the first two requests from his several meetings with USG officials, but his frustration was nonetheless evident. "You are the key player. If the U.S. doesn't help me, who will?" The USG has "a big investment in the Tribunal" and being more forthcoming on UNIIIC's requests is a way of making that investment pay off, he said.

¶10. (S/NF) During the meeting, Bellemare made several other requests for USG action:

-- USG support when the Committee considers the Tribunal operating budget, scheduled for September 25, the same day that Lebanese President Sleiman will meet President Bush in Washington. He warned that the budget includes high travel costs, but that these are necessary because of the need for frequent travel between the Hague and Lebanon. Bellemare thanked the USG for what he said was a much improved attitude on the part of the Tribunal Management Committee. His requests have been more favorably received than was the case previously.

-- He raised the prospect of consultations among the P-5 on a new resolution to clarify some legal issues. He mused about the possibility of getting Chapter VII authority for the Tribunal via such a new resolution, but seemed to think that was not doable in the Council.

-- He asked for a reaction to the 26 sketches of possible suspects that UNIIIC had given the USG.

-- Finally, he asked about getting access to alleged Hizballah defectors reportedly in the U.S., or a definitive negative response to the request. The answers the USG has given him so far on this subject, he said, have been not sufficiently definitive.

#### INTERVIEWS IN SYRIA

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¶11. (S/NF) On this issue, Bellemare repeated what he said in the IWG meeting (reftel): that he did not want to go to Syria until the USG or other sources had provided names of leads he should ask to interview and other information. If Syria denied his request to interview these people, then he would

have evidence of Syrian non-cooperation. Just asking would give some indication to others in Syria where his investigation might be headed, which could provoke more cooperation "if I hit the right person."

¶12. (S/NF) Bellemare emphasized the urgency for responding to his request related to Syria, first, because UNIIIC's mandate and with it Chapter VII authority expires at the end of the year, and second, the importance of conducting the interviews before the interviewees disappear by being killed or other means.

OTHER ISSUES: NEW MINISTER OF JUSTICE,  
UNIIIC PRESS SPOKESPERSON  
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¶13. (C ) Bellemare said he had a very positive impression of new GOL Justice Minister Ibrahim Najjar, who had told Bellemare he wanted to be helpful. Najjar's predecessor, Charles Rizk, was a vocal supporter of the Tribunal but also known for public criticisms of Bellemare and the previous Commissioner, Serge Brammertz. Bellemare, a Canadian, noted that Najjar had taught at McGill University in Montreal and they had some mutual acquaintances.

¶14. (SBU) UNIIIC now has a press spokesperson who started work the week before, Bellemare reported. The official had good relevant experience as the spokesperson for the Yugoslavia Tribunal and most recently for the UN Legal Affairs office. The new spokesperson is currently working up a strategy for UNIIIC's press interaction.

¶15. (C) Bellemare said he had been advised by several persons to not make statements in public that might be seen as disrupting the current relative calm in Lebanon. He planned to follow that advice, (NOTE: Bellemare traveled to Saudi Arabia September 15, we understand. We will seek further information from UNIIIC contacts. END NOTE.)  
SISON